

# **Rhode Island Department of Health**

## **Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Committee**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, September 17, 2008**

**In attendance: Cheryl LeClair, Carrie Bridges, Janice Fontes, Christina Mathews, Ed D'Arezzo, Magarita Jamarillo, Phanida Khamsomphou, and Tammie Smith**

### **Call for Additional Agenda Items**

**There was not a call for any new additional agenda items.**

### **Approval of Minutes**

**Cheryl noted that the minutes for the June and August meeting have not yet been completed. She noted that there was no meeting in July. She said she would work on completing them in the near future.**

### **Update on Recruitment Activities**

**A warm welcome was extended to the new EEO Committee at-large members, Tammie Smith and Christina Mathews. Janice informed the group that she will be retiring on 9/26/08. Cheryl noted that Rosa Anderson is now working at OHHS. She noted that she would update the membership list to reflect recent changes in membership and**

**present the revised list at the next meeting to take place on October 15.**

### **Refinement of Work Plan**

**Carrie asked those present to refer to the work plan, which she noted is no longer a draft work plan since the Executive Committee (EC) approved it on September 9, 2008. She stated that, in accordance with plans, Cheryl and she also met with Lenny Green on September 4, 2008. She said that the meeting with Lenny was arranged because so much has changed (and continues to change) and it was thought that he could help provide some clarification and direction for the EEO Committee. It was noted that, after the meeting with Lenny, all of the questions on the work plan remained questions. It was also noted that Lenny offered to arrange a meeting with the state Human Resources (HR) Chief once the new consolidated HR Department was settled.**

**Carrie noted that the EC meeting went just as well. The EC approved the EEO Committee's draft work plan. It also approved the concept of a Mentoring Program for the Department of Health and charged the EEO Committee to develop a proposed plan for its review. The EC suggested that the Department's North East Public Health Leadership Institute (NEPHLI) graduates might be a good source of potential mentors. It was also noted that Bob Marshall sits on a regional work group that is looking at developing a mentoring program for the**

region and that, at Bob's invitation, Carrie and Cheryl will be participating on a conference call on this topic on September 26, 2008.

Given limited resources, Carrie asked the group to prioritize its work by voting for the strategies they believe are the most important to work on at this time. She noted that each member would get an opportunity to vote for two strategies on the work plan. Ed suggested that the group focus on strategies over which we have control. As a result of this process, the following two strategies were identified to be the top priorities:

**Strategy 2.2 (6 votes):** To increase professional development opportunities.

**Strategy 1.5 (4 votes):** To increase and diversify internship positions at the department.

Janice refrained from voting since she was retiring, but noted that she agreed with this decision. It was noted that other strategies could be incorporated into these two strategies. For example, the mentorship program (Strategy 2.3) and access to Journal articles (Strategy 2.6) could be integrated with Strategy 2.2. It was suggested that the Committee scout out whether managers feel that they can take interns at this time of change and increased workloads.

It was also noted that, in addition to NEPHLI and Leadership Rhode

Island (as noted in the work plan), there might be other professional development opportunities that we don't know about. It was suggested that the EEO Committee develop an inventory of other opportunities. Ed informed the group that once the department's EEO plan has been signed, the department has an obligation to inform/re-inform the department's managers about their responsibilities. Ed noted that it would be nice if this informing process dovetailed the department's plan to get ready for new persons hired as a result of the recent departure of many folks due to retirement.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:30 am.

#### **Schedule of Remaining 2008 Meetings**

**Wednesday, October 15, 2008 9:30 am – 10:30 am Room 302**

**Wednesday, November 19, 2008 9:30 am – 10:30 am Room 302**

**Wednesday, December 17, 2008 9:30 am – 10:30 am Room 306\***

**\*Please note the room change for the 12/17/08 meeting.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Carrie Bridges**

**Cheryl LeClair**